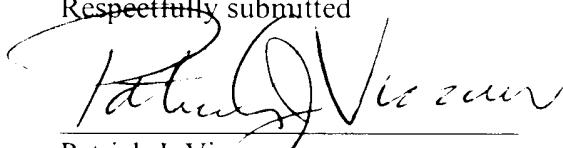


REMARKS

The present invention is a Divisional Application of U.S. 09/467,936, filed December 21, 1999. It is respectfully submitted that the claims of the present invention, as amended herein, should be held patentable, and passage of the claims to allowance at an early date is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner have any concerns after considering the present Preliminary Amendment, he or she is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below so that those concerns may be expeditiously addressed.

Respectfully submitted



Patrick J. Viccaro

Registration No. 27,842

ALLEGHENY TECHNOLOGIES INCORPORATED
1000 Six PPG Place
Pittsburgh, PA 15222-5479
Telephone: (412) 394-2839
Fax: (412) 394-3010